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FOR PAO FROM O'BRIEN

E.O. 11652: N/A

IF APPROPRIATE PLEASE PASS MY BEST WISHES TO TIMERMAN UPON HIS RELEASE FROM JAIL.

OBRIEN

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Reading File

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CONFIDENTIAL

Timmerman

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS : Col. Miguel Mallea Gil, Sub-Secretary for Institutional Relations, Office of the President
William H. Hallman, Political Counselor, American Embassy, Buenos Aires

DATE AND PLACE : April 19, 1979, Downtown Buenos Aires

SUBJECT : Things that Did Not Happen and Probably Won't

Most of the topics I raised elicited a negative from Col. Mallea Gil. He was interested in Ambassador Castro's consultations schedule and wanted to discuss his planned May 2-11 trip to Washington. He affirmed that Argentina had had no role postponing the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights visit here, and said that a message would be sent from the government on April 20 stating Argentina's willingness to receive the Commission, old or new. Our discussion on the NAM Summit is reported separately.

Among the rumors he batted down:

No. Economy Minister Martinez de Hoz cannot be considered a candidate for Argentina's Washington Embassy, for there is no hint that the President would replace him as Minister. Gerardo Schamis is not being considered for the job either. Aside from Raymunda's being named for Rome only one embassy is slated for a new "political" ambassador: Lisbon, where Americo Ghioldi has done an excellent job but wants out because he is old and unwell. Ghioldi is prized for his Social Democrat connections all over Europe, Mallea Gil says, and was responsible for the Montoneros' not being accepted at the recent world socialist conclave in Vancouver, Canada. He would be replaced by another "responsible, democratic socialist."

No. Gabriel Martinez is not about to be replaced as Argentina's ambassador in Geneva. "He is not really a Peronist -- and certainly not an old leftover friend of Lopez Rega -- but just someone who always knows how to take advantage of new situations."

No. The Charles Krause (Washington Post) story of Ambassador Castro's having said Videla told him Timerman's release was

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postponed indefinitely was annoying -- just as a recent Newsweek story (authored in part by Bob Cox) that Videla had said "Timerman's being a Jew certainly didn't help." But it was tempest in a teapot -- no one remains mad at Krause and certainly no one suspected that Ambassador Castro really had said such a thing.

No. General Ojeda (the former police commander) is not under arrest or suspicion of car thievery or whatever. He's well and in his job as deputy head of the Campo de Mayo complex. He will be up for Major General at mid-year -- but probably won't make it because the competition will be keen.

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E.O: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, AR
SUBJECT: TIMERMAN CASE
ACTION: SECSTATE WASHDC
INFO:
REF:

1. HECTOR TIMERMAN SON OF/IMPRISONED LA OPINION EDITOR VISITED EMBASSY ON THE FEBRUARY 28 TO DISCUSS HIS FATHERS CONTINUING DETENTION. HECTOR TIMERMAN REPORTED THAT THE FAMILY HAD DELIVERED THE COMPLETE DOCUMENTATION JUSTIFYING THE ACQUISITION OF ALL OF MR. TIMERMAN'S PROPERTIES TO THE COMISION NACIONAL DE RECUPERACION PATRIMONIAL ON FEBRUARY 5. ON FEBRUARY 21 THE FAMILY HAD RECEIVED A FORMAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FROM THE GOVERNMENT ATTORNEY THAT THE DOCUMENTS HAD BEEN RECEIVED. THE FAMILY HAS NO IDEA HOW LONG THE PROPERTY LEGITIMIZATION PROCESS WILL TAKE. THERE ARE 35 TO 40 CASES BEFORE THE COMMISSION. THE FAMILY ERNESTLY HOPES THAT THERE WILL NOT BE A PROGRAMED DELAYS IN THE COMMISSIONS CONSIDERATION OF THE TIMERMAN CASE.

2. HECTOR TIMERMAN SAID THAT HIS FATHER'S SPIRITS WERE GOOD, HE ADDED THAT HIS FATHER HAS THE "OPTIMISM OF A PERSON WITH A JUST CAUSE".

3. HECTOR TIMERMAN ADDED AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE DISCUSSION THAT THE FAMILY HAD HEARD A NUMBER OF RUMORS ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF HIS FATHER'S POSSIBLE RELEASE BUT MENTIONED THAT THE FAMILY WAS TRYING NOT TO OVERREACT AS IT HAD BEEN BADLY DISAPPOINTED BY OVERREACTING TO SUCH RUMORS IN THE PAST. HE URGED CONTINUING U.S. EFFORTS TO SEEK HIS FATHER'S RELEASE FROM THIS UNJUST IMPRISONMENT AND THANKED THE

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EMBASSY FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S CONTINUING INTEREST.

4. EMBASSY COMMENT: WE WERE VERY PLEASED TO LEARN OF AMBASSADOR MAJA ESPIL'S SIGNALLING TO DAS MACNEIL THAT GOA WOULD SOON RELEASE TIMERMAN. EMBASSY RECEIVED INQUIRIES FROM THE NAVY STAFF ON FEBRUARY 20 AND 22 REGARDING U.S. INTEREST IN TIMERMAN, VOGLER AND DEUTSCH CASES. THIS INQUIRY CAME FROM CAPT. MONTEMAYOR WHO HAS A DIRECT STAFF SUPPORT ROLE FOR ADMIRAL MASSERA. WE SPECULATE THAT MONTEMAYOR WAS PREPARING BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR MASSERA'S USE, POSSIBLY IN JUNTA DISCUSSION OF SUBJECT CASES. OUR ONLY HOPE IS THAT APPOINTMENT OF BEAGLE COMMISSION WILL ALLOW THE JUNTA TO FOCUS ON OTHER ISSUES SUCH AS RELEASE OF THESE U.S. HIGH INTEREST CASES.

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